

C
COMFORTABLE
SERVICE.

COMFORTABLE SERVICE:

AN ENTIRELY ORIGINAL FARCE,

IN ONE ACT.

BY

THOMAS HAYNES BAYLY,

MEMBER OF THE DRAMATIC AUTHORS' SOCIETY.

AUTHOR OF "A GENTLEMAN IN DIFFICULTIES," "PERFECTION,"
"MY ELEVENTH DAY," "WHY DON'T SHE MARRY?" "HOW DO
YOU MANAGE?" "THE DAUGHTER," &c. &c.

AS PERFORMED AT

MADAME VESTRIS'S ROYAL OLYMPIC THEATRE.

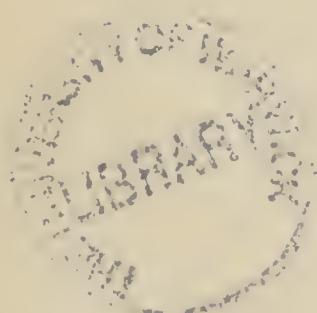
LONDON:

WILLIAM STRANGE, 21, PATERNOSTER ROW.

1836.

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TO

CAPTAIN RICHARD LECKONBY PHIPPS,

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THIS

ORIGINAL COMIC SKETCH

IS AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED

BY

THOMAS HAYNES BAYLY.

Jan. 1, 1836.

C O S T U M E.

ADMIRAL SIR SMITH BROWN.—First Dress, an Admiral's morning uniform. Second Dress, for the evening.

MASTERTON.—Blue coat, dark trowsers.

SIMON.—First Dress, a footman's morning striped jacket and grey trowsers. Second Dress, pink gingham gown, shawl, apron, woman's shoes, straw bonnet. Third Dress, a woman's night-cap and bed-gown, both very much frilled, his own trowsers seen, the bed-gown coming some way below his knees.

CORK.—Dressed as a butler

TIERBOUCHON.—Ditto, but in the French style.

MRS. ALDOVE.—Handsome grey silk evening dress, black velvet hat, white ostrich feathers.

MARY—Coloured cotton gown, apron, cap.

MRS. JAM.—Old fashioned dark silk gown, white apron, muslin handkerchief, spectacles, grey hair, high old fashioned cap,

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

<i>Admiral Sir Smith Brown</i>	.	.	.	.	Mr. F. MATTHEWS.
<i>Masterton</i>	.	.	.	.	Mr. WYMAN.
<i>Simon</i>	.	.	.	.	Mr. KEELEY.
<i>Cork</i>	.	.	.	.	Mr. SALTER.
<i>Mons. Tierbouchon</i>	.	.	.	.	Mr. W. VINING.
<i>Mrs. Alldove (relict of John Alldove, Esq.)</i>					Mrs. MACNAMARA.
<i>Mary</i>	.	.	.	.	Mrs. ORGER.
<i>Mrs. Jam (Mrs. Alldove's Housekeeper)</i>					Miss GOWARD.

COMFORTABLE SERVICE.

ACT I.—SCENE I.

An Apartment in Mrs. ALDOVE's house—an open window with balcony, a door in flat. Mrs. ALDOVE and Sir SMITH BROWN enter from door o. p. Curtains to the windows, not drawn.

Mrs. Alldove. Why will you talk to me in that *very* odd way, Sir Smith?

Sir Smith. Odd, my dear madam! I see nothing odd in a hale old fellow like myself, addressing a buxom widow in the language of love.

Mrs. A. Love, Admiral! the regard due to the intimate friend of my poor dear, dead, much lamented John —

Sir Smith. Oh, ma'am, don't talk like that; I'd rather encounter a storm at sea than a woman's sighs.

Mrs. A. As his friend I shall always regard you, and have received you into my house as my guest, as he did in old times—poor dear fellow!

Sir Smith. Well, but, Mrs. Alldove, this is no answer to the unequivocal proposal which I have presumed —

Mrs. A. Don't, don't,—I cannot listen.

Sir Smith. I am rejected, then; well, madam, I —

Mrs. A. Do not be so hasty; my affections are buried in the grave of *my John*!

Sir Smith. Very proper; but still a time *may* come when you may with propriety dig 'em up again.

Mrs. A. Oh, Admiral, what an expression.

Sir Smith. Don't agitate yourself—I mean the affections, not the gentleman; call up the affections and bestow them on me. Come, ma'am, to the point, yes, or no.

Mrs. A. Dear me, Admiral, you forget you are not walking the quarter deck; we widows are not accustomed to be spoken to in the *imperative mood*.

Sir Smith. Ha ! ha ! Well, my dear lady, give me one smile indicative of your consent, and you shall be *potential* for ever after ; —I am not like your first husband.

Mrs. A. (*Sighing.*)—Your lamented predecessor.

Sir Smith. My lamented predecessor, as you say ;—no, he was a good easy man, who sat in his good easy chair, and let you manage the ship, fair weather or foul. Now you musn't expect that with me you shall be flag Lieutenant, but hang me, if I won't be Lord High Admiral.

Mrs. A. Dear me, Sir Smith, I trust my management was unobjectionable ; my conduct——

Sir Smith. Not a word to say against your conduct ; do you suppose if I had, I'd have made you signals of matrimony ? no, no the wife of an English sailor should be like Cæsar's wife, above suspicion ; did I not know you to be a most proper behaved widow, I'd never have solicited you to become Lady Smith Brown.

Mrs. A. You are very particular about the conduct of women, I know ; but not jealous, I hope ; a jealous husband would be the death of me.

Sir Smith. Jealous ! not a bit—that is, unless I had very good reason. But the slightest impropriety, the least want of decorum in a wife's conduct, would drive me frantic. Nay, my dear Mrs. All-dove, were you now to evince any want of proper circumspection, I should weigh anchor and be off.

Mrs. A. Pray do not wait for sailing orders, Admiral.

Sir Smith. Don't take what I have said amiss ; you are, I know, all purity ; think of what I've said, and give me your hand in token of goodfellowship : that's right ; I have secured an opera box for this evening, and you will do me the favour of accompanying me.—(*Crosses to L. H.*)

Mrs. A. Then I shall expect you to dinner, Admiral ; you are going to your club, I suppose ?

Sir Smith. Yes, I shall dawdle away the morning at the United Service ; what can a bachelor do ? Though you so kindly received me into your house, I cannot intrude of a morning ; so I go there to read the newspapers, and talk to old messmates. But I say, widow Hymen's Temple is the best United Service Club after all.

[*Exit L. H.*

Mrs. A. Well, I suppose, after all, I must accept him. Dear me, had I foreseen such an event, I should never have invited him to stay in my house. I thought nothing of these *tete-à-têtes* with the friend of my late husband ; but now they will become so embarrassing that—a—in fact, the sooner we are married the better.—(*rings the bell.*)—Its very awkward having no lady's maid.

Enter Footman, L. H.

Oh, send the Butler to me.

[*Exit Footman, L. H.*

I have been without a maid for this fortnight, and it is most extraordinary that he has not succeeded in getting one.

Enter Tierbouchon, L. H.

Oh, Tierbouchon, you are there.—Have you heard of a good lady's maid yet?

Tier. Ah ! non, madame ! cest un affair tres disagreeable—tout ou faut mal a-propos.

Mrs. A. But is it possible that you have made enquiries ?

Tier. Oui, madame, oui ; I ask all people—tout la monde. But no femme de chambre come, pas de tout !

Mrs. A. Well, I have written to a friend, who, I think will most probably recommend one to-day ; when she arrives, I shall wish to see her. [Exit L. n.

Tier. Oh, certainement ! oui—but I will parlez doucement in de little whisper first ; and if she be not the body vat vill help me for to put de l'argent into ma poche—she no come here. [Exit L. n.

SCENE II.

An apartment in Masterton's House—a window opening to balcony, similar to that in Scene 1.

Enter Cork and Mary.

Mary. Well, Mr. Cork, you'll find nothing with me ; and all I can say is, its exceeding disagreeable and ill-convenient to have one's boxes rummaged ; I can't abide it ; and so humiliating like to be suspected of robbing the plate-chest.

Cork. Well, but, Mary—

Mary. Not that anybody would find anything in my boxes—there they are in that room—but my own peculiar personals—very genteel silk gowns, certainly ; but all given me by my late missisis—I say, Mr. Cork, all this is mighty ill convenient.

Cork. That may be, but my master mustn't lose his plate, six dozen spoons, big and little ; several gravies, and a great many teas.

Mary. Well I knows nothing about 'em, and as you had the care of 'em, it seems to me you ought to be 'sponsible.

Cork. And so I am ; and that's the reason I take so much pains to find out the thief, and luckily I think I have him in my eye.

Mary. In your eye ?—aye—a pupil of your own, mayhap.

Cork. Why, for the matter of that, I might have taught him a great deal, if he had been honest.

Mary. And pray who do you suspect ?

Cork. Never you mind—'tan't a petticoat ; I tell you so much for your comfort ; I'm sorry for the fellow, but justice must take its course : he hasn't lived here long.

Mary. You don't mean Simon?

Cork. Umph! p'raps I do, and p'raps I don't.

Mary. You do, I see you do—and he's as innocent as me!

Cork. Time will show—as to the robbery I can truly say I am deeply concerned.

Mary. In it; or at it, may a body ask?

Cork. I'll thank you not to be so insinuating.

Mary. Then don't go for to say that Simon did it. Simon's a gentleman's gentleman, and might have had a butler's situation long ago, only he chose to wear a livery for the sake of living in the same service with—with a female that he doated upon.

Cork. And that was yourself, I suppose?

Mary. That's no affair of yours; but let me advise you not to bear false witness against Simon—if you do—

Cork. Hush! here's my master.

Mary. And if there is, I'll not hush; I'll speak out; but I know you'll not dare to go on with it, and don't think that I care for your threats, not I; here's my character—my character from my last place—upper housemaid—best character possible, and I always wears it on my person. It's the character I came here with, and the character I'll go away with. Mary Maunders, sober, honest, tidy, and civil spoken; here it is, always has it about me.

Enter MASTERTON, L. H.

Mas. What is all this disturbance about? Cork, have you discovered the thief? this is not the first time I have been robbed, and I am determined to make an example of the offender. The chest was in your care, and I look to you for redress.

Mary (*aside to Cork*) In course—just what I said.

Cork (*aside*) Hold your tongue. (*ALOUD*) I must request, then, that all the servants boxes may be searched; mine, of course, amongst the rest.

Mary. In course, your's among the rest; but it isn't likely you'd leave a silver thimble there, after this here rumpush.

Cork. I can guess where the stolen goods will be found.

Mas. Indeed! where, pray?

Mary. Now, don't ye listen, master, don't.

Mas. Hold your tongue, my good girl, (*Crosses to centre*)—we don't suspect *you*; Cork, name the person.

Cork. Send for Simon's boxes in this minute, and for Simon himself, if you wouldn't give him time to make off—let me go and fetch him.

Mas. By all means—(*Exit Cork, L. H.*)—and do you stay here. I'll not suffer you to go and give Simon notice of his danger.

Mary. Sir, Simon is injured innocence; of that I'm certified; and as for myself—I've given myself warning, and won't stay in such

a suspicious place. You may turn my boxes inside out, and then I'll turn 'em outside in, and go.

Mas. Why, nobody suspects *you*; besides, your wages were to be raised, and you were to be my sister's own maid, instead of upper housemaid.

Mary. I won't be riz—not neither my wages nor myself—I won't be riz, nohow.

Mas. But it was arranged; and what is my sister to do without a maid?

Mary. Can't possibly say, sir—but can't possibly stay, sir; I've an undeniable character from my last place, and here it is—honest, tidy, and civil spoken—so none of your nonsense, rummaging one's boxes. I'll go and offer to the widow lady next door.

Mas. Civil spoken, hey! well, do as you please; here comes the culprit.

Mary. Culprit, sir! oh laws! what language.

Enter SIMON, L. dressed in a footman's morning linen jacket, and grey trowsers. Cork and other servants carrying his box.

Simon (as he enters) Heyday! what are ye at? I'd thank you not to meddle with my things, you sir: that box is mine. Ah, master here! surely, sir, you won't suffer this usage; an honest man's boxes bump'd about like that!

Mas. Hold your tongue, Simon; all this blustering looks bad; an innocent man could not fear a search.

Sim. Fear, sir; I fears nothing, sir; if you gives the search-warrant, well and good; I submits, as in duty bound.

Mary (aside) Oh, I could cry my eyes out, or scratch out master's.

Sim. May a poor body just ask what's missing?

Cork. You know well enough—spoons and forks, fellow.

Sim. You won't fork nothing out of *my* box. Fellow, indeed! fellow servant, if you like. Spoons, indeed! look in your own box, spooney.

Mas. Give up your keys quietly.

Sim. There (*Cork is going to take the keys*) No, not for you; I'll give 'em to nobody but master.

Mas. (takes keys, and gives them to Cork). Now open the box.

Mary. Oh that ever I should live to see such *miliations*!

Sim. Don't cry, Mary—see how I'll bear it.

[*Cork opens box, takes out a spoon and a fork.*]

Cork. Just as I thought; see, sir—no doubt he has melted down the rest.

Sim. What! why the devil himself must have been to my box; I wish he had smash'd in his tail as he popped down the lid. Don't believe it, Mary, I'm shot if I did it.

Mary (falls on her knees, crying) I'm sure he never done it. 'Twas somebody as bore him a grudge.

Mas. That remains to be proved. Go instantly for a constable, and, to guard against an escape, we'll lock him up in this room till he arrives. Come, all of you.

Mary. I'll not be tored away from him—here I'll stay.

Mas. Leave the girl with him, if she chuses to stay; but secure the door. [Exeunt all but *Simon* and *Mary*, l. h. *Mary*, still on the ground, sobbing. *Simon* sits on his box.]

Sim. I'm a persecuted creature—a worm that they've trodded on; I know master thinks its ail along of my fondness for hops and balls. They'll make me dance at a rope's end now.

Mary. Don't make use of them words—don't.

Sim. I'm going my last journey, my dear; I've secured the box seat, at all events.

Mary. Is there nothing to be done, *Simon*? I knows you didn't steal them spoons. You wasn't born with a silver spoon in your mouth, that's plain.

Sim. But it seems I was born with one in my box; for hang me if I know how else it got there.

Mary. And pr'aps they'll hang you all the same! What is to be done? Let me see! this window opens on the balcony, and that goes straight an end all along the next house. Get out at once, and then you can walk into the drawing-room window next door.

Sim. Not a bad thought—Mrs. Alldove's house, you mean?

Mary. Yes, a rich widow; I've thoughts of offering myself to her as lady's maid; here's my character.

Sim. (takes paper from her) Let me see—"This is to certify—*Mary Maunders*, sober, honest, tidy, and civil spoken." I say, *Mary*!

Mary. What, *Simon*?

Sim. Gad, I've a great mind —

Mary. What do you mean?

Sim. Couldn't I go in your place, *Mary*, hey?

Mary. You! What, go as lady's maid to a widow!

Sim. Why, I'm "sober, honest, tidy, and civil spoken;" besides, anything's better than going to prison.

Mary. That's true; but, law, my petticoats won't fit you.

Sim. No, rather scanty; but I'll make 'em fit.

Mary. Well, well, wait a bit; I'll go and fetch 'em.

Sim. Do, there's a dear; make haste [Exit *Mary*, r.]: they'll soon be back, and if I'm not clear off first, I shall get cold lodgings for the night.

Enter *MARY*, with gown, shoes, bonnet, and a bundle.

Mary. Here they be—here's my best bonnet, and my shoes, and my gown, and my apron—and in that bundle all what's proper.

Sim. Thank you, my dear; shall I find every thing right? all the little indispensables? law, what shifts I am put to!

Mary. Now go—your best chance is, that there's no one in the drawing-room ;—if so, dress there as fast as you can, and then steal down stairs—if you meets nobody, open the hall-door, and get clear off

Sim. Ah, but if I do meet anybody——

Mary. Then say out plump that you're come to offer as lady's-maid.

Sim. Plump enough—well?

Mary. The minute they sees you, they'll say you don't suit, and then you will be shewn out.

Sim. I beg your pardon—it's possible the widow may like my appearance, and hire me to attend her—*very* possible—what's to be done then?

Mary. Why, do the best you can; there's no other chance of escape; so go, be off at once, and take care of my character.

Sim. Its safe with me; good bye, Mary—say I jump'd down into the street. One kiss—good bye. [Exit by balcony.]

Mary. And now what shall I say when they come! I'll fasten this here shawl to that there rail, and vow he got down like Mrs. Clari in the play. (*Fastens shawl to rail*) I hears 'em a coming! they shall get no good out of me: I'll sit on poor Simon's private box. (*Sits and pretends to cry bitterly.*)

Enter MASTERTON, CORK, Constable, Servants.

Mas. How's this! not here! search that room.

[Exit Constable, &c. R. H.—MARY cries.

Mas. Don't make that noise.

Mary. Oh! oh!

Enter Constable, &c.

Cork. He has escaped!

Mas. Escaped! which way?

Mary. Oh, oh, oh—dear me!

Cork. Here is a shawl—he must have got down from the balcony.

Mary. Oh dear! oh dear!

Mas. Speak, girl, where is he?

Mary. He j—ju—jump't out of win—win—window.

Mas. Something must have broke his fall!

Mary. Broke his fall! broke his b—b—bones! Oh! I saw him limp away round that there left-hand corner, b—aw—bawling out for help.

Mas. Then he cannot be far off—follow him.

Mary. Do, hurry, and pray get his bones mended. Oh, I'm a miserable woman.

[Exit MASTERTON, &c. P. S.—MARY crying, o. p.

SCENE III.

Apartment in Mrs. ALDOVE'S—door in flat, and window with curtains.

Enter Mrs. ALDOVE, dressed for the Opera.

Mrs. A. How disagreeable it is dressing with the assistance of a person who is unused to wait at a lady's toilette; poor Mrs. Jam teases me sadly. I have been so worried, that I really think I shall be induced to take the first that offers, without being very particular, provided her character is respectable. (*Takes chair and sits—door in flat opens a little, and SIMON pops out his head, with a cap and pink ribbons—door closes again.*)

Mrs. A. Sir Sinith has had his afternoon nap, I suppose, and will soon join me; we shall see little of the opera, the exquisite Somnambula, but the ballet is a new one. (*Door opens again, SIMON appears in female attire.*)

Sim. (aside) I wish I were clear off—I'll steal down stairs, and get into the street—I've thrown my boots under the sofa. (*He creeps across the room to door—Mrs. ALDOVE, just as he is going out, turns her head, and says, “Who's there?”—The stage is getting dark—SIMON turns, as if just entering the room, and curtseys.*)

Sim. Only me, ma'am.

Mrs. A. And pray who are you? Oh, I suppose the lady's maid that Mrs. Jones was to send me from Richmond.

Sim. (aside) I must say yes. (*Aloud*) Yes, ma'am—Mrs. Jones, ma'am.

Mrs. A. I can scarcely see you.

Sim. (aside). That's fortunate.

Mrs. A. And you've come so late that I am dressed.

Sim. (aside) Egad, that's lucky, too.

Mrs. A. Your name, child.

Sim. (aside) Child! Hem! (*Aloud*) Si—hem—Mary Maunders, ma'am. Here's my character.

Mrs. A. (takes it) I will examine it at my leisure. How did you come here?

Sim. I walked, ma'am—footed it all the way.

Mrs. A. You must be very tired; and, as I am going to the Opera, and shall probably be late, I shall not require your services to-night.

Sim. (aside) More good luck.

Mrs. A. You may retire to rest as early as you please. My plate-chest, where I keep some jewels of value, is in your room. It is a little room opening into mine, and you have also a door to the back staircase. The housekeeper will shew it to you. I shall not

rise to breakfast to-morrow—you must bring me my coffee at eleven.

[Exit P. S.]

Sim. Bring her her coffee at eleven! not if I can get clear out of the house. As she's gone that way, I'll try the opposite door. (*Goes to o. p.*) Zounds, there's somebody coming—what will become of me?

Enter Sir SMITH BROWN, with a chamber candlestick in his hand, from o. p.

Sir Smith. I'm afraid I indulged in my nap too long; I'm dressed, however, and now where's the widow? Not here! Oh, young woman, can you tell me where Mrs. Alldove is?

Sim. (curtseying) No, sir, I can't say.

Sir Smith. I don't know your face—the new lady's maid, I suppose.

Mrs. A. (without) Admiral, where are you? the carriage is at the door.

Sir Smith. Coming, my dear lady, coming. Well, that is really the oddest looking lady's maid I ever saw.

[Exit P. S.]

Sim. Well, I'm glad he's gone—I was rather afraid of the old Admirable—I'll make off this moment. (*Goes to door o. p.*) Somebody else coming—how will this end?

Enter Mrs. JAM, o. p.

Mrs. Jam. Oh, this is the young woman my wissis spoke of, I suppose. Why you're not so young as I expected! They be just drove off, and now I'll shew you your room.

Sim. Thank ye, ma'am—if you please.

Mrs. Jam. I thought you must have taken a share of mine at first.

Sim. Thank you kindly—hem!

Mrs. Jam. But we've managed to get your little bed ready. Shall I come and tuck you up, and take away the light?

Sim. Not for the world, I'm very careful—leave me a stinguisher. (*Aside*) I must sleep here, that seems settled, but hang me if I'm not up and off at cock crow!

Mrs. Jam. This way, my dear—this way—take care of the step.

[*Exeunt o. p.*]

Enter Mons. TIERBOUCHON, p. s.

Tier. (*draws curtains of window*) They be partie—gone to de Opera—see Somnambula—Ah well—I do not walk in my sleep, but I walk when oder people sleep, and dat better for my occasions. I must parlez vid de new femme de chambre; she sleep in de little chambre vere is de chest vere de l'argenterie and de jewel be kept—tres disagreeable! Oh, malapros. Ah, she come—quite one Miss John Bull! No matter, I love de fine woman, and de fine woman ever love me.

Enter SIMON, R. H.

Simon. (Aside.)—Old mother Jam wanted to put me to bed, but I wouldn't suffer it ; she's off to her own nightcap. However, I'll try to find the street door—oh, another interruption!

Tier. (Bowing.)—Ah ! charment ! bon soir, madmoiselle.

Simon. (Aside.)—I wonder who that chap is,—*(Curtseying.)*—how d'ye do ?

Tier. Vous et charment—tout au fait—vous parlez Francais ?

Simon. Don't comprehend you no ways, mounseer.

Tier. Avez vous voir, madame ?

Simon. Hey, what ?

Tier. On, pardon—vous comprend pas ?

Simon. I don't understand you ; I dare say its impudence. I shall go and complain to my mistress.

Tier. Excusez moi—you have take de place, den ?

Simon. To be sure—excellent good place ; thirty pounds a year, my tea and sugar, and my washing, and to sleep in a little bed, in a little room, next my missis.

Tier. Oui—yes, miss—madame has de jewel superbe magnifique ! cost tousands of your pounds ; she keep dem in strong box in votre petite chamber.

Simon. Where does she keep 'em ?

Tier. In your little room ; if dey vere my own, my fortune made, and me marry you.

Simon. Thank you kindly.

Tier. But de lock—very good lock, not one key fit it.

Simon. (Aside)—Oh ! oh ! I smell a rat.

Tier. Sit you down—tout le monde gone sleep, but we two ;—me will drink your good health, and you drink mine.—(Exit, and returns with bottle and glasses, and a cake.)**

Simon. No objection to that—(Aside.)*—Upon my life, a drop of comfort is just what I want.—*(They sit.)**

Tier. (Fills glasses.)—A votre sante, ma'mselle.

Simon. Ditto to you, whatever you mean.—(Drinks.)*—Mighty pleasant tipple—what d'ye call it ?*

Tier. Ah, oui—tres bon, it is good, Curaçoa.

Simon. Cure us so—'pon my life, if all the doctors would cure us so, physic would be very agreeable : another glass.

Tier. (helps him.)—Prenez garde—it is strong ; voulez vous mange quelque chose, oui mange.—(Offers cake.)**

Simon. Oh, mangys the French for cake, I suppose—certainly, I'll pick a bit. I'll trouble you for a drop more stuff.

Tier. (Aside.)—She will get what dey call tipsy—all de better, she sleep sound, and no hear me rummage de plate box.

Simon. (Finishes the bottle.)—Well, I say, oid chap, I must off to bed ; you will set up for missis, I suppose ; well, I shall be asleep

before she comes home,—(*Aside.*)—and I'll be off before anybody is up in the morning --what a row there'll be; papers full of it--“mysterious disappearance of a lady's maid.” Good night, you sir, I know the way.—(*Takes candle and curtseys.*) [Exit o. p.]

Tier. Bon soir, mademoiselle; glad she be gone; she sleep sound after what she call de tipple; my mistress soon come back and de admiral. I'll put away de liqueur,—(*puts away bottle and glasses.*)—and now I'll unfasten de window, dat Mounseer Cork may get in by and bye, when all de famille dorme tranquille.—(*Unfastens window.*)—I expect Monsieur, de butler, from de next house, to help me pick de lock of de jewel box.—(*A loud knock at the door.*)—Ah, dere is madame, I must go open de door. [Exit r. h.]

MARY enters from window cautiously.

Mary. All is quiet. I could not rest without coming to see if I could get a peep at poor Simon. How my heart does palpitipitate; when all the people are asleep he'll surely try to get out of the house, and if I'm in the way I may help him. Oh, dear! people coming, I must wait till they're all gone to bed. [Exit at window.]

Enter TIERBOUCHON with Mrs. ALDOVE and SIR SMITH BROWN.

Mrs. A. I'm very tired; light the chamber candles. Are all the family gone to bed?

Tier. Oui, madame.

[Exit p. s.]

Sir Smith. Are you tired, my good lady?

Mrs. A. Yes, Sir Smith, very; I must wish you good night, you will find refreshments in my little boudoir—(*Points to side door.*)

Sir S. Thank you, I'll take a glass of wine before I go to bed. Good night; to-morrow, my dear madam, I trust that our intended marriage may be announced to our friends.

Mrs. A. Heigho! good night, Admiral, good night.

[*Takes candle and exit o. p.*]

Sir S. Well, I declare, I'm very tired too; I'll just go and put on my slippers and dressing gown, and then take one glass of the widow's Madeira in her quiet boudoir, before I retire for the night.

[*Exit l. h. with candle. Stage dark.*]

Enter TIERBOUCHON softly, R. H.

Tier. Him gone to him nightcap--now den all will soon be quiet as one little mouse. (*A tap at the window.*) Ah, dere's de signal; it is Monsieur Cork what tap.

Enter CORK at window.

Cork. You see I'm punctual. Is the house quiet?

Tier. Hush! doucement—doucement.

Cork. Where is the chest?

Tier. Don la chambre de Mademoiselle—de new femme de cham-

bre; she is gone to sleep one half hour avant, with great many drops too much.

Cork. Come, then; I've brought all the requisite tools. Hark!

Tier. A light! hush---come to my pantry --doucement—hush.

[*Exeunt cautiously,* P. S.]

Enter SIR SMITH in dressing-gown and slippers, with candle, o. p.

Sir S. Now I shall enjoy a glass of Madeira in comfort. 'Pon my life, the widow's admitting me to her boudoir is a good sign; no other man ever shows his face there. She's a very particular lady, and I like her the better for it; I'm very particular, too; now for it.

[*Enters side door, and closes it.*

Enter MARY, cautiously, at window.

Mary. I'm certain sure that there's mischief on foot; that rogue Cork is come here for no good;—pr'aps he's come to look for Simon. If I could but find his room, I might give the alarm. Oh, dear me! Hark, I hear somebody in there. I'll go into this room.

[*Enters side door, and closes it.*

SCENE IV.

Small ante-room to Mrs. ALDOVE's boudoir. Enter Sir SMITH, with a pair of Wellington boots in his hand.

Sir S. Can I believe my eyes? a pair of man's boots under the widow's sofa—in her own very private and particular boudoir! What can it mean? No good, that's certain. Oh, these women—and above all, these widows; I'm glad I'm not married yet, at all events.

Mary (*peeping into the room, r. n.*) A gentleman! I've a great mind to tell him all. I'll go and unburden my mind (*throwing herself on her knees before Sir Smith*) Oh, Sir! Sir, Sir! Listen to a demented young woman.

Sir S. Why, what on earth do you want?

Mary. Oh, sir, there's robbery certain—and murder, perhaps; and I want to prevaricate it all, if I can; for the young man what keeps me company is in the middle of the mischief. Oh dear, oh dear.

Sir S. Don't make a noise—now get up, and tell me quietly who you are?

Mary. Oh, sir, I was an upper ousemaid, but I'm going to better myself; I'm to be lady's maid now—what the French people call a femmy de sham.

Sir S. You are the new maid, then?

Mary. What new maid?

Sir S. Mrs. Alldove's;—yet, no; now I look again, you are much better looking; *she* seemed to me to be a very masculine looking person.

Mary. You've seen her then—him, I means—him as took the situation to-day.

Sir S. What are yon talking about?

Mary. Hush—I think I had better trust you, but you won't go for to expose him.

Sir S. My good girl, what can you mean?

Mary. Its very mystifical.

Sir S. What?

Mary. Mrs. Alldove's new femmy de sham—

Sir S. Well.

Mary. Its *all* sham; the lady's maid, I mean.

Sir S. What of her?

Mary. Her's him—the lady's maid's a man.

Sir S. What!

Mary. Its true, sir; a very nice young man, sir; Simon by name, and thems his boots!

Sir S. (*drops boots*) His boots!

Mary. (*snatches and kisses them*) I knows 'em by the patches. Bless his old boots, how I loves him. I'm in a very hysterical situation, like a woman as finds out mischief in a stage play.

Sir S. The boots must have an owner; so much for my interesting widow, my wife that was to be. Lucky I hadn't taken her in tow, with a young man in the house sailing under false colours. The hair of my wig stands on end.

Mary. Oh, sir, I hear people moving about the house.

Sir S. Not a doubt of it. Come with me at once to Mrs. Alldove, and tell me every particular, that I may be master of the subject. Mind you stick to truth.

Mary. Stick at truth, sir. Oh, I'll stick at nothing, to save my dear Simon.

Enter Mrs. ALLDOVE.

Mrs. A. I'm certain I hear voices about the house! What! can I believe my eyes? Oh, Admiral, Admiral, are you not ashamed of yourself? It's a mercy I detected you before you led me to the altar.

Sir S. Don't try to criminate me, ma'am.

Mary. And I'm not to be criminied

Mrs. A. Not another word, Admiral, I'm ashamed of you.

Sir S. If you're not ashamed of yourself, you're the most brazen widow I ever heard of—you're detected.

Mrs. A. How do you mean—detected? *you* are detected with one of the maids.

Sir S. You are detected with one of the maids—your lady's maid, forsooth.

Mary. Your femmy de sham.

Mrs. A. What of her?

Sir S. Her, ma'am; him—the femme de chambre's a man!

Mrs. A. A man !

Sir S. Oh, madam ! madam !

Mrs. A. Was ever a lady in such a dilemma ; oh ! Sir Smith, I know nothing about it. If it be so, let us turn him out. But is it not an invention to screen your detected interview with the young woman ?

Sir S. She comes to seek her lover.

Mary. Yes, it's true.

Mrs. A. You both avow it. To seek you !

Mary. Him ! no, a nice young man ; but there's murder doing p'raps, so come along.

Sir S. Come—I will know the truth.

[*Excunt R. H.*

SCENE IV.

A bed chamber ; a little bed, with white curtains closely drawn ; a plate chest at the back ; stage darkened. Curtains of bed open sufficiently for SIMON to put out his head in a very much frilled woman's night cap.

Simon. I don't hear any noise ; if they mean to come and rob the plate chest to night, I wish they'd make haste ; I begin to get sleepy. This bed's deuced short for a man of my size. Mother Jam has lent me her best night clothes, and I've put 'em on over my own dress, so I shan't catch cold, whatever happens ; hark ! what was that ?—(Jumps out of bed ; he has on a frilled white bed-gown, which reaches down to his heels.)—By jingo, here they are ; if I get into bed again, I shan't have my fists at liberty. What shall I do ? Oh, I know, I'll pretend to be walking in my sleep. I'll give 'em a touch of La Som-nam-nambelly, or some such name ; the sleep walking lady ; now for it.

TIERBOUCHON and CORK enter with a dark lanthorn.

Cork. She has put out her candle—all's right.

Tier. Oh, mon Dieu ! dere she is. Regardez.

Cork. Hush ! she doesn't seem to see us ! why, I do believe, she is walking in her sleep !

Tier. Oh oni, voila ! La Somnambula !

[*SIMON walks about imitating the movements of the representatives of La Somnambula ; they follow him : at last he goes and sits upon the plate chest.*

Tier. Ma foi ! What to do ? she sits down upon de box.

Cork. I'll take her by the hand, and lead her quietly away ; she'll never wake.

[*He goes to him, and TIERBOUCHON approaches on the other side.*

SIMON jumps up, knocks down CORK, and then turns to box with TIERBOUCHON, in a pugilistic attitude.

Sim. There's for you : when you put that in the papers, head it with " Intrepid conduct of a Lady's Maid."

[He knocks down TIERBOUCHON.]

. Enter Sir SMITH, Mrs. ALDOVE, MARY, and Servants, who secure
• • CORK and TIERBOUCHON. The moment they appear, SIMON
runs, leaps into bed, and hides under the clothes.

Mrs. A. It surely is a man !

Sim. (pops out his head) A man ; yes, to be sure, and very lucky too ; good bye to your plate and jewels if I'd been a young lady. Ah, Mary ! (He jumps out of bed and runs to her)

Mary. Simon ! I didn't know ye in your long clothes.

Sim. No wonder, I hardly know myself ; they're Mrs. Jam's appurtenances. Come to my arms.

Sir S. Oh, Mrs. Alldove ; fy, madam.

Sim. Don't fy that lady, sir ; she's no missis of mine in any sense of the word ; I came here in disguise to avoid going to prison, and lucky for you I did. I may face my master now without fear ; so, Mary, the sooner you and I leave these premises the better.

Mary. With all my heart, Simon ; and if I'm to be riz, you shall be riz too, for I knows master will give you the keys of the cellar ; I always had a wision that I'd marry a butler.

Mrs. A. Well, Sir Smith, are you satisfied ?

Sir S. Gad, widow, I began to fear my heart was swamped ; but henceforth, when the ship is in peril, we'll take to the life-boat together. (He takes her hand and salutes her.)

Sim. That's all right. (Advancing) And now, ladies and gentlemen, having so often smiled upon me when I made my bow, may I venture to hope that I shall not be less fortunate to night, though for the first time I make my curtsey.

CURTAIN DROPS.

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